# Graduate Council Meeting Minutes

April 4, 2018, GBB 202, 12:00 – 1:00 PM

*Members Present:* B. Baker F. Brown, L. Broberg, M. Corkish C. Dumke, J. Farnsworth, K. Harris, G. Morrel, M. Murphy C. Nelson, C. Palmer, S. Ross, S. Stan, N. White, J. Wiltse
*Members Absent/Excused*

*Ex-Officio Present:* A. Kinch, N. Lindsay, V.P. Whittenburg

Call to Order

* The minutes from 3/21/18 were approved.

## Communication

* There is $110,000 in the Bertha Morton fund and there are 57 applications. Typically one or two scholarships of $5,000 are granted if there is an exceptional candidate(s). The normal amount of the fund for scholarships is $80,000- 90,000.
* President Bodnar was welcomed to the Committee and members introduced themselves. He is still in the listening and learning mode.

Graduate education is at the core of UM’s identity for three reasons. 1) UM has more graduate and professional students that the rest of the state. The UPC is talking about how to distinguish this. 2) Our talented researchers and scholars add value and grow the Missoula community and culture. Their research is impactful to society. 3) Graduate research benefits the undergraduate experience.

UM will be a good size at 15,000 students. It provides an intimate undergraduate and graduate student experience. President Bodnar went over the statistics of graduate programs with VP Whittenburg and Associate Dean Kinch. We had 2351 graduate students enrolled in the fall. Seventy seven percent of them are self-supported and only 10% are from out of state.

The President asked how the Council would define success. Vice President Whittenburg would like graduate programs to be better and bigger. The size of the faculty directly relates to the number of graduate students. The student faculty ratio varies across campus. As the ratio goes up faculty availability to participate in graduate education goes down. Often departmental structure prioritizes undergraduate education. There should be more of a strategic balance and parallel attention. Faculty are not credited for mentoring graduate students. This effort falls under service, which does not show in productivity data.

President Bodnar suggests that we be more deliberate about telling graduate student stories. Journalism does a good job. He has established a Cross Communication Council to work on the issue. Central administration can do a better job of getting the stories out. A central platform can amplify the brand and stories. Units could use assistance with elevating their online presence and recruiting materials. Some efforts should be centrally coordinated / funded, while others are better facilitated by the unit or program.

One measure of success is programs ability to recruit the best students. Often students are attracted to a particular professor’s research and consider how the program will benefit them professionally. Graduate Programs could raise their profiles by tracking their graduates. This could be done centrally. Increasing faculty travel and competitive stipend levels can help with recruitment. Graduate Program Directors should have appropriate recognition and resources. Assistance with developing foundation funds for scholarships would help units.

President Bodnar encouraged Graduate Council to consider “how to do less better” and to think about the right levels of payoff and focus on the Areas of Excellence identified by the UPC.

Graduate students suffer from isolation. There should be assistance with student placement after graduation. Students who have to supplement their income take longer to complete.

President Bodnar suggests the possibility of offering tuition waivers based on students ability to pay similar to the target waivers provided to undergraduate students. This would essentially provide students with a discount. Vice President Whittenburg cautioned that the financial impact must be carefully balanced in accordance with Board of Regents Policy.

We need to focus on excellence and ensure graduate offerings are distinctive. UM offers a holistic experience for students. The UPC is working to identify what tis the UM core / way. We have good rankings and need to ensure the perceptions match to reality. We can fix this problem.

## Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned shortly after 1:00 p.m.